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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am grateful for the work you do, and this opportunity to comment on the proposed Heavener Coal mining lease application.

I would urge you to reject the application for the following reasons:

1) It is a clear violation of the Forest Service's Strategic Framework for Responding to Climate Change--that wonderful policy and philosophical document that you created to guide you in matters like this. Facilitating coal extraction and sale to foreign entities is a direct link to climate change.

2) The access roads and their maintenance with herbicides is no small matter, and has a significant effect on the landscape and the potential for watershed degradation.

3) There is a clear history in Arkansas of extraction companies creating environmental disasters and then declaring bankruptcy, leaving the State, and leaving the mess to the taxpayers to cleanup.

4) Mining operations have historically degraded the environments in which they are located. They are not neutral players. Arkansas's own experience, and the experiences in Appalachia should be a warning to anyone considering allowing a national treasure--the National Forest--to be exploited for commercial gain. I urge you remember the quote from Gifford Pinchot that you print in your own Framework: "The conservation of natural resources is the key to the future. It is the key to the safety and prosperity of the American people, and all of the people in the world, for all time to come. The

very existence of our Nation, and of all the rest, depends on conserving the resources which are

the foundations of its life."

Again, I am grateful for the hard work you do for the American People. I frequent and enjoy the National Forests in the Boston and the Ouachita mountains. Please don't let greed carry the day.

Please reject the application.